

St. Helens Mist

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COUNTY OFFICIAL PAPER

**POLITICAL AND INDUSTRIAL
SKIES BRIGHTEN**

Demand for applying business principles to public affairs has grown stronger in the past year. From city government to national affairs there is more pressure to secure a dollar's worth of service for a dollar expended. There is a growing conviction that business and industries, large and small, are more important than all stirrings of political pots. While crusades against business are becoming less popular, representations of capital seem willing to meet labor more than half way. When corporations like the Southern Pacific and the Union Pacific voluntarily raise wages of unorganized labor they recognize this tendency. When sugar companies raise contract prices of beets to farmers for 1917 on a falling market they reveal wisdom against less prosperous days in future.

ECONOMY OF CONSOLIDATING COMMISSIONS

The taxpayers' league at Portland is drafting bills to consolidate and abolish commissions and save \$500,000. Insurance and corporate and state banking departments are to be under one head and save \$60,000 annually. Dairy and food commissioners and state sealer of weights and measures are to be consolidated and the expense cut \$20,000. Five or six educational boards and boards of regents are to be put under one state board of three business men. The expense of higher education will be cut \$250,000. Land boards and water commissioners are to be put under one head, as are all engineering functions and agricultural and horticultural functions.

It is proposed that this shall be the last appeal made to the legislature on these lines and the bills, if not enacted, will be initiated by the people.

Some fifty taxpayers went on record Saturday at the budget meeting as in favor of abolishing the office of roadmaster and placing the duties of this office on the shoulders of the county surveyor. At this same meeting a road tax of 10 mills was voted and this will raise about \$130,000. With this amount to spend over such a large area as Columbia county comprises and with some ten men as supervisors doing the spending, it would be unwise to abolish the office. The Mist reiterates its former statement, that the abolishing of the office is unwise and impracticable. If the roadmaster is not capable of performing the duties of the office, or if he is capable and does not perform those duties, do away with his services, but do not abolish the office. Oregon is now on the eve of a great road building era and Columbia county will and must bear her share. We will then need a roadmaster. The county court should seriously consider this before taking any snap-shot judgment.

In the recent election it was the west that swung the balance of power and California was the state that turned the trick. On Monday, it was again the east vs. the west, and the scene was again laid in California. However, Oregon turned the trick and showed the football enthusiasts of the east that the west is to be reckoned with. Let's keep it up and get into the habit.

The New Year edition of the Oregonian was a credit to that great newspaper, and excelled all previous efforts. The information contained as to Oregon and her resources were clearly and truthfully set forth and will sooner or later be of great benefit to the entire state. The Oregonian is to be congratulated.

For the information of our readers we will state that the Standard dictionary gives this definition of a budget system: "A statement of probable revenues and expenditures and the financial proposals for the ensuing year." We note that oratory and sectionalism are not included.

Nineteen seventeen should be a great year for St. Helens. One very essential item which would be of great help to the city would be the reorganization of the near defunct commercial club.

Read every page of the Mist, for there is something interesting on every page.

Why is a budget meeting?

LIBRARY REPORT

That the public may understand and appreciate the need and importance of the public library we submit the following report for the month of December, that being the first month that the library was open every evening and Saturday afternoon.

No. of books borrowed..... 327
No. of magazines borrowed..... 100
No. of borrowers..... 114

This is exclusive of the Study Club Library, which is for club members only.

As to the progress of the reading room, there is every cause for encouragement, for while some have not known of it there have been several who have taken advantage of it during the month. However, we are sure that with the advent of the new magazines which the Woman's Club has ordered off the reading table there will doubtless be many more readers. These magazines should be in the library beginning with the February numbers. The list includes the best of the magazine world, viz.: Century, World's Work, Collier's, St. Nicholas, Little Folks, Mother's, Something to Do, Boy's Life, American Boy, Popular Mechanics, National Geographical, Modern Priscilla and Home Needlework. These magazines are to be kept on the reading table during the month, but after a new number is in they may be borrowed the same as old magazines.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

MUNICIPAL WATER PLANT PROSPERS

Oregon City Water Department Is Paying Bills With Cash.

The semi-annual report of the water department, completed Monday night by the board of water commissioners, shows the department in excellent financial condition. The report was handed to the council at a meeting Wednesday night.

During the six-month period the receipts of the department totaled \$54,852.71, and the disbursements amounted to \$49,726.95. The department now is on a cash basis, having no outstanding warrants and buys all its supplies with cash.

The financial and property statement of the department shows that the assets exceed the liabilities \$72,730.60, the assets being figured at \$487,730.60.

OREGON ROAD COST \$9.19 PER CAPITA

In 1915 Oregon spent the equivalent of \$9.19 on roads for every man, woman and child in the state. Montana alone spent more, \$9.77. Washington spent only \$5.84, more than one-third less than this state. Even California, with her marvelous highway system, spent only \$8.73. All of the \$6,183,000 was spent on Oregon roads in that one year. The figures are on the authority of circular No. 63, of the United States department of agriculture.

SOME RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER NONSENSE

J. T. Taber has resolved that he will never be in a dry town grill when a raid is made. He was at the Savoy in Seattle a few nights ago.

Doc Oswald Deming has resolved to emulate the example of Henry Ford, who recently began to practice the strictest economy. Ford has cut his personal expenses to \$20,000 per year. The "doc" will have a little hard sledding if he sticks to his resolution.

Judge Mattan has resolved to get a copy of Roberts Rules of Parliamentary Practice before the next budget meeting. He is afraid that Bill Fullerton, Mode Griffith or O. J. Evenson might slip it over him.

W. B. Dillard says: "We don't know very much about Shakespeare, but he evidently knew all about us."

E. S. Snelling recently returned from an extended trip through southern Oregon. In a certain small town he participated in the production of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." In his criticism of the play he said that the dogs were very good but except for one instance they had poor support.

A. H. Tarbell says that as soon as the farmers get an eight-hour day the exodus to the cities will stop.

Walter Blakesley says there is no such thing as having too many irons in the fire; but the main thing is to keep all of them hot.

J. G. Watts, the Scappoose merchant, is a mathematician as well as a philosopher. He recently stated that the most wonderful things in nature were the smallest, and when asked for an illustration gave this example: "A flea leaps 200 times its own length. It would be necessary, therefore, for a six foot man to jump 1,200 feet to parallel this performance." This remark prompted Edwin Ross to remark "that one species of fly takes 440 steps in traveling three inches and does it in a half of a second, which would correspond to a man running 20 miles a minute." Verily the minds of great men turneth to small things.

John Philip, who is something of a poultry fancier, made this remark: "Even if the price of eggs continue to go up, the hen will still have to scratch for a living."

Joe Day states that if he was put in entire charge of all the road building in Columbia county he would make Walter Blakesley and O. Henry Olean his cabinet.

In speaking of the proposed appointment of a farming expert for Columbia county, Tom White said: "It is quite apparent that the old-time fruit tree salesmen have all become efficiency experts."

J. H. Thatcher's version of the smart alec is the fellow who impressively says something, then starts away, then pauses about ten feet off to turn and observe the effect of his words.

A friend of Lester Wellington tells this story: Lester, who for the past several months has been living in Seaside, was attentive to a certain young lady and called frequently. On one of his calls the family bulldog met him and barked very loudly, and Mr. — being aroused by the barking, looked out and saw Lester at the gate. He invited Lester to "come right on in" and said, "Don't be afraid of the dog, you know a barking dog never bites." Whereupon Lester replied: "Yes, Mr. —, I know that, but I don't know exactly what that dog will do when he stops barking, or when he will stop barking." The bulldog was chained up.

E. I. Ballagh has resolved that when he goes hunting with Ben Copeland he will either get out of range or else stay right behind Copeland. Ed says that he now has some faint idea as to how the Canadian recruits feel when a bushel of bullets come rushing by in the vicinity of their heads.

Dr. Hoskin says he is not like that pathetic individual who can't afford a cheap automobile and yet is ashamed to be seen in one.

Mrs. L. L. Baker and Mrs. Charles Brown have resolved that when they go collecting for the library that they will always go together, believing in the old adage of "safety in numbers."

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POSTAL RATES MAY BE CHANGED

The annual postoffice appropriation bill reported to the house today carried provisions to increase rates on newspapers, magazines and other second-class matter by a zone system; establish penny postage on local letters and impose heavier penalties for sending liquor through the mails. The bill would appropriate \$329,553,120, \$4,000,000 more than the current postoffice act; it would readjust rural carriers' salaries and increase the pay of a number of employees.

Magazine publishers have protested vigorously against the rate increase, which would affect only publications carried more than 300 miles, and Postmaster General Burleson proposed to Chairman Moon, of the house postoffice committee, a sub-provision to postpone the effectiveness of the increase for a year after the measure becomes a law. The bill as reported would make the new rates apply after June 30, however, and Mr. Moon has not indicated what action will be recommended on Mr. Burleson's suggestion. The bill probably will be debated in the house within a few days.

The bill directs that hereafter catalogues and similar publications be classified as third-class matter with increased postage. Another section provides that after July 1 next rural carriers' pay shall be based on length of routes, time required to serve them, and quantity of mail transported. The maximum pay would be \$2,000 with a minimum of \$480 a year. No rural route which would require an automobile is to be established unless the car can be used with reasonable regularity throughout the year.

One thousand dollars fine, two years' imprisonment, of both, are prescribed as penalties for mailing liquors.

In proportion to its population Norway is the greatest seafaring nation in the world. On January 1, 1916, its mercantile marine consisted of 3,486 vessels, with a tonnage of 2,756,391, or an average of more than one ton for each inhabitant, and practically the whole fleet is owned by Norwegian citizens.

There were admitted into the United States in October 37,056 immigrant aliens, in September 36,398.

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Another Year
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